

**CITY OF SOUTH PASADENA
NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
MINUTES – October 22, 2019**

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 7:05pm. Present were: Rona Bortz, Amy Jones, Cynthia Liu, Bill Kelly, and Lauren Myles. Madeline Di Giorgi and Stephen Leider had excused absences. Council Liaison Dr. Marina Khubesrian was absent. Staff present: Julian Lee, Deputy Public Works Director; Kristine Courdy, P.E., Deputy Public Works Director; and Arpy Kasparian, Water Conservation & Sustainability Analyst.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

There were no public comments.

PUBLIC HEARING:

1) Tree Removal Hearing: 1611 Spruce Street

Tree removal for development project located at 1611 Spruce Street. The applicant is proposing to remove a total of six mature trees, one of which is not protected. The applicant is also requesting to remove a Stone Pine tree prior to the issuance of the building permit due to the damage it is causing the wall and driveway of the neighboring property. Staff reviewed the applicant's replacement plan and found that the applicant will be required to add three additional trees either on the site or in the City public right-of-way. The applicant gave a presentation on their plans and building constraints that led them to the needed removal of six mature trees.

There were no public comments.

Commissioner Jones expressed concerns over the significant reduction in tree canopy which would contribute to the urban heat island effect. She questioned the need of the secondary driveway and would like to see shade trees added to the open lawn. Commissioner Myles suggested using the existing driveway for the underground parking and Commissioner Liu asked if the front lawn could be used for the required open space. Commissioner Kelly asked if it would be possible to build up to the 4-story limit instead of building out. The applicant responded that the current design was the best they could do with all the building constraints. Building constraints include being unable to change anything to the original historic house and the area in front of it including the driveway, the minimum required number of parking spaces, distance requirements between driveways, and the required open space.

Commissioner Myles suggested planting trees in the open area in front of the property and Vice Chair Bortz suggested changing the type of trees planned (i.e. fruitless olives) to ones with larger canopies and adding more trees to the parkway. The applicant confirmed that trees could be planted in the open area and is open to recommendations on types of trees and adding more trees to the parkway.

Commissioner Jones suggested planting broad-canopied trees in the south and west sides of the property since it gets the majority of sunlight and also commented to City staff that 24-inch box shrubs, such as the Eugenias, shouldn't count towards the number of required trees since they are better classified as shrubs. The applicant explained that a 3x3 planter will be built in that area and that they are open to suggestions on the types of trees to plant there. Commissioner Myles recommended planting Magnolia or Oak trees instead of citrus and olive trees to maintain the canopy.

The commission discussed suggesting to the Planning Department to consider changing parking lot requirements in South Pasadena to reduce the number of required parking spaces for buildings. The applicant commented that the new building will include one EV charging station per unit and will consider installing a permeable driveway.

Kasparian to send NREC final package and meeting date/time of Cultural Heritage Commission meeting.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER KELLY, SECOND BY COMMISSIONER MYLES, CARRIED 4-0 (COMMISSIONER JONES ABSTAINED), to approve the conditions of approval with the following comments on the landscape plan:

- Plant additional shade (large-canopy) trees on south and north sides of the property
- Add parkway tree(s) along Spruce Street
- Remove Eugenias in planters and replace with citrus and/or olive trees
- Approve early removal of the Stone Pine tree upon approval of the project from the Cultural Heritage Commission

ACTION ITEMS:

2) Approval of Minutes – Meeting of September 24, 2019

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER JONES, SECOND BY COMMISSIONER LIU, CARRIED 4-0 (COMMISSIONER KELLY ABSTAINED), to approve minutes.

REORDERING OF AGENDA:

Vice Chair Bortz requested to move Item 3 after Item 4. There were no objections.

PRESENTATIONS:

- 4) HR 763: Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act – Robert Haw, Citizens' Climate Lobby
Robert Haw, Citizens' Climate Lobby, gave a presentation on HR 763 and responded to Commission inquiries. Kasparian to check legislative platform to determine possible next steps.

ACTION ITEMS:

3) Overview of Current Weed Control Practices Citywide (Carryover from September 24, 2019)

Courdy provided additional information requested by the Commission regarding amount of glyphosate used and costs associated with switching to alternatives. Use of glyphosate has dropped significantly over the past year and alternative forms of weed control are used when possible. Alternative herbicides are less effective and have higher costs. City staff recommend to continue current weed control practices and City staff will continue to work with the landscape provider to ensure minimal use and locations of applications.

There were no public comments.

Commissioner Kelly commented that although the EPA has not classified glyphosate as a carcinogen, the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) and International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) have and asked about the cost increase associated with switching to alternatives. Courdy explained that the contractor gave a lump sum estimate and considered higher turnover and other business costs. Commissioner Jones commented that some planters are located in high-use areas in parks and recommended eliminating spraying in those areas. Courdy confirmed that the City landscape provider would work with the City to limit spraying in those areas.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER MYLES, SECOND BY LIU, CARRIED 5-0, to recommend continuing current weed control practices and limit applications of glyphosate in planters located in high-traffic areas of public parks.

COMMUNICATIONS:

4) City Council Liaison Communications:

Mayor Khubesrian was absent.

5) Commissioner Communications:

Commissioners Liu, Commissioner Myles, and Vice Chair Bortz had no comments. Commissioner Kelly shared information regarding the new dehydrator located at the Pasadena Rose Bowl. Commissioner Jones pointed out a recent parking lot resurfacing project at Shakers that did not include any trees. She also announced a public viewing of the film, "Life in Plastic," at the Pasadena Central Library on November 6th.

6) Staff Liaison Communications:

Kasparian announced that the City Green Action Plan is scheduled to go to City Council on November 6th. She gave an update on the Climate Action Plan and announced that the first public meeting would be held on November 14th at the Library Community Room.

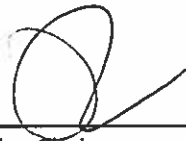
7) Upcoming Events:

- Free Advanced Smart Gardening Workshop – 10/26/19 (Pasadena)
- Watershed Restoration Program – 11/2/19 (San Gabriel Canyon Environmental Center)
- Climate Action Plan First Public Meeting – 11/14/19 (South Pasadena Library)

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER KELLY, SECOND BY JONES, CARRIED 5-0, to adjourn meeting at 9:00p.m.

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing minutes were adopted by the Natural Resources and Environmental Commission of the City of South Pasadena at a meeting held on



Rona Bortz, Vice Chair